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Chairman: Mrs. ESPINOSA (Mexico)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 101: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued) (A/51/3 (Parts I and II), A/51/327, A/51/208-S/1996/543, A/51/357, A/51/450; A/C.3/51/L.2, A/C.3/51/L.3)

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AGENDA ITEM 158: QUESTION OF THE ELABORATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AGAINST ORGANIZED TRANSNATIONAL CRIME (continued) (A/C.3/51/7)

1. Mr. MUSAKA-SSALI (Uganda), commenting on agenda item 101 and the role of the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), said that the international community now recognized the scope of organized transnational crime and had a better appreciation of the threat which it posed to the security and stability of all nations. On the one hand, resources which would be valuable in promoting development were diverted to combat that scourge and, on the other, the integration of international structures and technological advances facilitated the laundering of money, in particular money derived from drug trafficking. His delegation attached particular importance to the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and welcomed the action taken by the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division in implementation of resolution 50/146, in which the General Assembly reaffirmed the importance of technical cooperation and advisory services and called for them to be strengthened.

2. With regard to the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/145 and 50/146 (A/51/327), his delegation was pleased to note that, in its resolution 1996/13, the Economic and Social Council welcomed the progress made with regard to elaborating a programme of action to promote the effective use and application of international standards and norms in juvenile justice and recognized the need to strengthen international cooperation and technical assistance. It looked forward to the report of the Secretary-General on practical measures in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice to eliminate violence against women.

3. Turning to the report of the Secretary-General on UNAFRI (A/51/450), his delegation noted with satisfaction that, in resolution 50/147, the General Assembly commended the Institute for the efforts it had made towards fulfilling its mandate, notwithstanding the serious budgetary constraints. The Institute continued to be recognized as a dynamic operational instrument for regional cooperation in the fight against crime which could not be adequately dealt with by national action. In view of its financial situation, the Institute had redoubled its efforts to establish partnerships with donor Governments, agencies and other institutes in the areas of training, comparative research and policy development, information services, advisory services and technical cooperation.

4. The Institute was to be commended on having organized, in June 1996, in conjunction with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the Commonwealth Secretariat and the University of Botswana,

a regional training workshop on "Crime in southern Africa: towards the year 2000". That workshop, which brought together at Gaborone 49 participants from six southern African countries, addressed many issues relating to the prevention of urban criminality and violence against women. Two workshops which were to be devoted to environmental crime and transnational criminality in Africa could not be held for lack of funds. The Institute had, however, carried out action-oriented studies on the resettlement of street children, crime prevention in urban areas, the social rehabilitation of prisoners, patterns of criminality and, above all, the deleterious consequences of crime to the sustainable development of African countries. It was also proceeding to compile reliable data on crime in all its social manifestations, particularly as part of a survey of victimization. In conjunction with the United States Department of Justice and Department of State, it was currently collecting information on extradition laws, procedures and practices in all African countries and was organizing a training seminar on extradition which would involve participants from all African countries.

5. As the Secretary-General noted in his report (A/51/450), his Government had continued to honour its commitment as host Government; it had fulfilled its considerable obligations and, in particular, offered support to the Institute in situations of acute difficulty. The African States which had continued to give strong political support to the Institute were to be commended. His delegation urged those African Governments which had not yet done so to become members of the Institute and hoped that the Committee would support the draft resolution on increased resources for UNAFRI which would be submitted by the Group of African States.

6. Mr CHOI (Republic of Korea), speaking on agenda item 101, said that crime, which had increased 5 per cent a year on the past five years, posed a severe threat to efforts to achieve democracy and sustainable development. The liberalization and globalization of markets were allowing organized transnational crime more room to manoeuvre. For that reason, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division should coordinate the action being taken.

7. His delegation was in favour of the General Assembly, at its fifty-first session, adopting the United Nations Declaration on Crime and Public Security and the International Code of Conduct for Public Officials, in order to supplement international standards and norms in that area. Moreover, it commended the efforts that had been made to formulate an international convention against organized transnational crime and the initiative taken by Poland in that regard.

8. Turning to agenda item 102, he said that his delegation was disappointed that only limited progress had been achieved during the past year in the field of drug control. That was all the more regrettable in that it was becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between transit, consumer and producer issues. Moreover, drug traffickers, who were constantly seeking new markets, were proving successful in infiltrating national boundaries and laundering the money they derived from their activities.

9. In order to combat the scourge of drug abuse, a balanced, comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach was essential. His delegation commended the pivotal role played by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in that regard since its establishment in 1991. It welcomed the plan to hold a special session of the General Assembly in 1998, in accordance with the recommendation adopted by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its thirty-ninth session, and hoped that it would represent a fresh starting point for action by Member States against drug abuse through the adoption of the Political Declaration, the revised Global Programme of Action and the draft declaration on the guiding principles of demand reduction.

10. Since drug control required international action, inter-agency cooperation should be streamlined to enhance efficiency. UNDCP was attempting to do just that by acting as coordinator of the discussion of the System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control. His delegation was grateful to the Administrative Committee on Coordination for establishing a more operational and updated action plan based on multi-agency sectoral and/or subsectoral plans.

11. UNDCP and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division were already collaborating on legal assistance and had just launched a joint programme on money-laundering for which an initial fund of $4.1 million had been allocated. Given the close relationship between drug abuse and crime, a more closely coordinated response from UNDCP and the Division was required for greater efficiency.

12. Lastly, while recognizing that the financial difficulties experienced by UNDCP and the Division were part of a broader crisis affecting the entire United Nations system, his delegation believed, nevertheless, that special consideration should be given to drug control and crime prevention, which were urgent issues that had a direct impact on international safety and stability. His Government would continue to support the strengthening of the relevant United Nations bodies, including UNDCP and the Division, and would contribute to international efforts to counter drug abuse and crime.

13. Mr. WISSA (Egypt), speaking on agenda items 101 and 158, reaffirmed the importance his country attached to the stability of all sectors of society and the safety of all its citizens. With regard to crime prevention, Egypt took care to ensure the application of the laws and the rule of law, in the light of its traditional, cultural and religious values, which were based on respect for the individual, property and the family. It had established a programme to combat all types of crime, especially terrorism.

14. Egypt supported the Polish proposal for the elaboration of a draft international convention against organized transnational crime. Such an instrument should help to combat new forms of crime and the dangers to society created by the links between organized crime and terrorism, which represented a flagrant, dangerous and unjustified violation of the principles of international law. At the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held in Cairo, Egypt had introduced a draft resolution on the elaboration of a code of conduct in that area.

15. Although the international community was aware that terrorism posed a growing threat to world peace and stability, there was no instrument of international scope to combat it. Consequently, there was an urgent need to prepare an international convention to combat the various aspects of that scourge. The President of Egypt had therefore proposed that an international conference on terrorism should be convened, which could serve as the starting point for the preparation of such a convention.

16. Egypt welcomed the positive outcome of the World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime, held at Naples, and invited all States to cooperate by mobilizing the necessary resources to implement the Political Declaration and Global Action Plan adopted by the Conference.

17. The fight against organized crime should also be conducted at the regional level. The United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme should therefore be strengthened, especially in the area of technical assistance. Moreover, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division whose workload had increased, should be reclassified as a department.

18. Egypt also expressed its deep concern over the financial situation of the United Nations and its institutions, such as the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, which jeopardized the strengthening of cooperation among the various entities involved in combating crime.

19. Mr. GAL (Israel), speaking on agenda item 102, said that the drug problem had become a real threat to Israeli society during the 1980s. Until drug consumption appeared, Israel had served merely as a transit country on the international drug trafficking routes. In 1988, the Anti-Drug Authority of Israel had been established to combat the new problem of drug consumption. Its role was to plan, coordinate and promote drug control activities. In cooperation with various governmental institutions, the Authority had established a network of services engaged in social, medical, education, training, research and enforcement activities. Despite those efforts, drug abuse continued to rise among both young people and adults. Therefore, a new approach to the problem had been adopted.

20. In the area of prevention, the emphasis had been placed on young people and high-risk groups. More resources would be invested in short- and medium-term activities and activities aimed at changing the attitude of the "generation of tomorrow" towards drugs. Each initiative would be followed by an evaluation.

21. In the area of enforcement, one way to fight drugs was to focus on the income from drug trafficking. In 1991, the Knesset had adopted a law empowering the authorities to seize assets acquired through drug trafficking. Israel was interested in, and hoped to learn from, other countries' experience. Israel was also on the verge of introducing a law on the laundering of money acquired through illegal activities that would enable it to ratify the 1988 Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

22. It also planned to amend existing legislation to include provisions regarding transnational crime and to confer extraterritorial authority on the

courts so that they could deal with offences committed beyond its borders, particularly drug offences.

23. Israel was making every effort to cooperate at the international level in combating drug trafficking, and was willing to share its knowledge in that area with other countries. It had signed nine bilateral agreements on cooperation in drug matters and was assisting several former Soviet republics in establishing their own national drug control agencies.

24. The changing world had left openings for the development of drug trafficking and transnational crime. Crime prevention and international drug control could not be separated. Israel therefore supported the recommendation to the effect that cooperation between the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme should be strengthened.

25. Mrs. PINEDA (Venezuela), speaking on agenda item 102, said that even though Governments had mobilized to combat illicit drug trafficking, the problem was still worsening in an alarming manner, as could be seen from the reports of the specialized agencies on the subject. For that reason her Government supported the recommendation made by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Economic and Social Council to convene, in 1998, a special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of establishing the priorities for a future multilateral drug control strategy and strengthening international cooperation in that area.

26. Her Government was very active in drug control. In particular, it was assisting the national commission to combat illicit drug use in its coordination activities and had amended its organic law on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances of 1993 to make it more compatible with the multilateral mechanisms in existence. Under that law, money-laundering was now a crime, and the use of precursors and chemical substances for the manufacture of illicit drugs was subject to penalties. The general principles of Venezuelan drug control policy were part of a national drug control plan. That plan, which had been drawn up by the national commission and the implementation of which was being monitored by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), accorded priority to prevention in all aspects.

27. Venezuela was fully aware of the problem of illicit drug trafficking and use, at both the national and international levels. It was very concerned that drug traffickers were sending drugs in transit through its territory, that poppies and coca were being cultivated in its border regions, and that its financial system was infested with dirty money. It was therefore following very closely the social and technological changes which had made drug control so difficult over the past 30 years and welcomed the organization, under the auspices of the Organization of American States (OAS)/International Conference against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, of regional conferences which had laid the foundations for model legislation and helped ensure that the States of the region applied more effectively the provisions to combat money-laundering in the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

28. In all international meetings concerned with drugs, Venezuela had constantly reaffirmed its political will to combat illicit drug trafficking and related crimes while respecting the principle of shared responsibility. Drug control required cooperation among all the countries concerned, whether they were consumer countries, transit countries and/or producer countries. For that reason, a common solution must be sought to combat drugs and promote international cooperation in that field in an unconditional, reciprocal and systematic manner, without infringing upon the sovereignty of the countries concerned or their principles of action. Venezuela once again reaffirmed its unshakeable will to continue the struggle it had undertaken against drugs and thanked the United Nations for the assistance it was providing to Member States in that area.

29. Mr. GELBARD (United States of America), speaking on agenda items 101 and 102, said that criminal enterprise posed serious threats to society by subtly undermining political, economic and social institutions. Traditionally associated with non-democratic forms of government, criminal organizations had been able to corrode some democracies in which they had gained significant influence. It was particularly disturbing that some countries were allowing massive drug producing and trafficking and money-laundering entities to recycle their profits in institutional financial circuits. The United States fully recognized the efforts undertaken by some countries over the past year to counter that trend but called on the others to take similar measures and on the international community to take action when States harboured or facilitated the activities of criminal organizations.

30. The struggle against organized crime must aim not only to cripple organized crime groups but also to deprive them of their financial base. The United States was doing just that; in 1995, for the first time, the United States President had invoked his powers under the International Economic Emergency Powers Act to target the Cali cartel. The United States was also using its visa laws to prohibit suspected drug traffickers, their families and their associates from entering its territory. As to money-laundering, the drug control services of the United States Administration had been directed to identify countries with serious money-laundering problems and assist them. Those services had therefore undertaken to establish greater cooperation with various countries in the areas of information, extradition, seizure of assets, freezing of bank accounts and retrieval of stolen cars, and by providing assistance to support stronger law enforcement and judicial systems, establishing regional law enforcement and judicial training centres, and working with the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division and its regional institutes. In that context, the United States called on all Member States to subscribe to the United Nations Declaration on Crime and Public Security adopted by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and by the Economic and Social Council.

31. International cooperation had never been more necessary than in Bosnia and Herzegovina where the fragile peace was threatened by organized crime. The United Nations, through its international police task force, was endeavouring to restructure the law enforcement sectors with goal of developing a policing capability in line with international standards. At the Dublin Conference on law enforcement assistance to Bosnia, held recently, the United States had pledged $17 million of the $100 million needed to finance the operation.

Several other countries had pledged contributions, but those commitments still fell short of the need. Failure of the international community to step forward would have serious consequences, particularly in Europe. Action must be taken now in Bosnia and Herzegovina, before the criminals became entrenched.

32. Some Governments were fuelling the drug trade by trying to compromise with organized crime or simply by inaction. Others sought a quick solution consisting, for example, of legalizing drug use or decriminalizing drug addiction, seeking to minimize the harm that was posed to addicts and that they posed to society. The United States, for its part, believed that the domestic demand for illicit drugs must be reduced, since otherwise it would be impossible to eliminate production abroad. It was for that reason that President Clinton had asked the United States Congress for a record $15.1 billion narcotics control budget, which was nearly 9 per cent increase over the budget for the previous fiscal year. The United States also felt that it was important to prevent cultivation, production and illicit drug trafficking so that efforts to control demand would not be doomed to failure. It was in that context that the United States Government had urged the countries which exported the chemical substances needed to make illicit drugs to create an informal group with the mandate of preventing drug producers from acquiring those substances. Such an arrangement would enable a larger number of chemical source countries to mobilize against the production of illicit drugs even before they became parties to formal agreements. It would also have the value of enabling the countries concerned to cooperate and strengthen existing arrangements, which the informal group was not intended to replace.

33. Seventy-five per cent of the States Members of the United Nations were now parties to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. However, the international community must not stop there. All Member States needed to become parties to the Convention and to step up their efforts to implement it through the enactment of necessary domestic laws and international cooperation in drug investigations and prosecutions. In that connection, the 1988 special session of the General Assembly should provide the opportunity to assess and support the implementation of all the United Nations conventions on that question.

34. To that end, the United States was assisting drug-producing countries to develop strong legal frameworks and credible institutions to eradicate drug cultivation and dismantle crime syndicates. The United States believed that the eradication of illegal drug production should be combined with substitute crop production strategies.

35. The United States supported the role of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in assisting countries to implement the United Nations conventions relating to drug control. However, even with the financial support of Member States, UNDCP could not finance the global effort against drug production and trafficking. It was ultimately up to the Member States to prevent the production, trafficking and abuse of illicit drugs in order to protect their citizens and national interests.

36. Today, more than ever before, the political will did exist, because no nation could afford to evade its responsibilities. Individually, all countries had the authority to expose and dismantle illegal organizations and to reduce demand for drugs. Collectively, they had the power to deny the illicit drug criminals their sources of supplies and chemicals by pursuing appropriate strategies and enforcing the standards already set forth in the international conventions.

37. Ms. TSABEDZE (Swaziland), speaking on agenda items 101 and 102 on behalf of the States members of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Swaziland), said it was particularly disturbing that most of the decisions that had been taken to combat drugs had not been implemented owing to the lack of resources, especially in developing countries. Yet, the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs had been escalating steadily. Consequently, the international community needed to collectively strengthen its efforts to address the drug problem. Furthermore, it was mainly through a global partnership that tangible results could be secured in the fight against organized crime.

38. In the SADC region, the lack of human, financial and material resources completely hampered the administration of justice. In that regard, the SADC countries welcomed the international community's role in helping them to alleviate those problems and appealed to that community to continue fulfilling the commitments it had entered into at the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. Technical assistance was indispensable to strengthening democracy and establishing an effective criminal justice system, as it contributed to creating conditions favourable to peace and stability.

39. SADC had recently established the Southern Africa Regional Police Chief Cooperation Organization aimed at achieving cooperation in crime prevention and detection, disseminating information on crime in the region and training police on a regional basis. It was already demonstrating its effectiveness in combating arms smuggling, drug trafficking and motor vehicle theft. Unfortunately, the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), which had been working in close cooperation with member States through the provision of information, training and research, was currently facing serious financial difficulties. Given the good work that UNAFRI was undertaking, and the potential for even better results, she hoped that the United Nations and the international community would seriously consider continuing to support it.

40. Well trained and well equipped law enforcement personnel was a necessary component of democratic societies. Recently, law enforcement officials, judges, prosecutors and prison officers from SADC member countries had received training, but the police, judiciary and correctional services in the subregion continued to suffer from the lack of appropriate basic equipment. SADC therefore called for the support of the international community in the provision of such basic equipment. Moreover, advisory services should continue to be provided for the reform of national legislation and the implementation of international criminal justice norms and standards. There was also a need to

upgrade computer services for the criminal justice system and to establish data banks for police, prosecutors and correctional services in most developing countries, including countries in the SADC region. In the view of SADC member countries, since the mass media had an enormous potential for increasing public awareness in the area of crime prevention, the United Nations should allocate the necessary resources to coordinate the development of tools to assist member States in the use of mass media in their efforts in that regard.

41. SADC member countries were of the view that cooperation and coordination of the activities of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division with United Nations bodies was crucial to the successful implementation of the mandates of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme. SADC had noted that the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had made some efforts to ensure the coordination of its activities with the relevant activities of the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Narcotics Drugs, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/146. Furthermore, SADC had noted that the Commission had exchanged with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations information on issues of mutual concern, as well as on the funding of specific projects. SADC endorsed that approach as it was an optimum and efficient use of resources. Concerning resources for technical cooperation activities for the biennium 1996-1997 approved by the General Assembly, SADC found it regrettable that the new posts had remained frozen and that a number of planned activities had had to be postponed. The priority considerations underlying the decisions of the General Assembly should be taken fully into account.

42. With respect to agenda item 102, she noted that SADC member States were also affected by the problems of drug trafficking and crime. They were being increasingly used as transit areas for narcotics and psychotropic substances between Asia and the Far East on the one hand, and Europe and America on the other hand. As a result, some of the abusive substances were being consumed by the young people of the subregion. In order to deal with that situation, cooperation had been established at the subregional level and interregional cooperation had been established between SADC and the European Union. As stated in the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Global Programme of Action (A/51/436), in October-November 1995, SADC and the European Union had held a conference in which UNDCP had participated on cross-border trafficking. A protocol had been adopted, which included provisions on cooperation in drug law enforcement and on the adoption of legislative and administrative measures against corruption. That protocol had since been ratified and had entered into force. Close cooperation between SADC and the European Union in that regard continued. The SADC member countries themselves were collectively engaged in a serious effort to combat drug trafficking. At the SADC Summit held in Maseru, Lesotho, in August 1996, the SADC heads of State and Government had signed a protocol on combating illicit drug trafficking, which was in line with the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. The main objectives of that protocol were to reduce and eventually eliminate drug trafficking, money-laundering, corruption and the illicit use of drugs through cooperation among enforcement agencies, reduce demand through coordinated programmes, eliminate the production of illicit drugs and protect the region from international drug traffickers.

43. Being fully aware of the important role that UNDCP played in coordinating the fight against drugs, SADC believed that it should be strengthened at all levels. In that regard, in view of the growing tasks assigned to UNDCP, the methods used for funding it should reviewed. Indeed, less than 10 per cent of its funding came from the regular budget of the United Nations, with the rest coming from voluntary contributions. Should such voluntary contributions decrease, it would no longer be able to carry out its mandate. Funding from the regular budget could and must be increased. SADC believed that the special session of the General Assembly in 1998 would be a good time to discuss the funding of UNDCP under the regular budget.

44. Mr. MEKDAD (Syrian Arab Republic) said that organized crime, fed by corruption and greed, was spreading virtually everywhere; the Secretary-General had stressed the seriousness of the situation in his reports (A/51/327, A/51/436 and A/51/437). The basic objectives of the United Nations regarding crime prevention were to coordinate international efforts, to enforce laws more effectively and to provide technical assistance in order to strengthen criminal justice. Establishing guiding principles in that area and implementing them nationally and internationally would make criminal justice a reality. Drafting model instruments which could be used as the texts of international or regional conventions would be an effective way of solving the complex problems of crime and its serious consequences. Gathering and sharing information using scientific methods would be another way of guaranteeing the smooth functioning of justice.

45. His country had acceded to most of the instruments aimed at combating crime, and participated in all conferences held to coordinate international action in that area. A greater exchange of skills and legal information, cooperative investigations, and confiscation of illegal funds would help to make international cooperation more effective. Bilateral and multilateral conventions would consolidate the effects of international instruments aimed at preventing money-laundering and investment of the proceeds of criminal activities. His delegation intended to propose amendments to the Economic and Social Council resolutions concerning that question.

46. His country strongly rejected and condemned criminal terrorism and banned any such activity in its territory. At the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, it had stressed that a distinction must be made between terrorism and the rightful struggle of peoples against occupation and for freedom, and he wished to reiterate that point. The Arab people of Lebanon and Syria had every right to resist Israeli occupation of the Syrian Arab Golan and southern Lebanon because that occupation was in itself an act of terrorism and must be considered a very serious crime which threatened the security of peoples and States. Israel must stop blocking efforts to bring about a just and comprehensive peace by implementing Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978).

47. The scourge of drug use and its painful social and economic consequences in all their forms (demand, cultivation, production, trade and distribution networks) must be dealt with. In 1993, his country had promulgated Act. No. 2 on the fight against drug abuse, which was inspired by the three United Nations instruments concerning drugs, and was endeavouring to harmonize its national

legislation with the international instruments dealing with that question. No drugs were cultivated or produced in his country. The Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior, the Arab League and the Arab Security Studies and Training Centre were cooperating with the international bodies to achieve the objectives of UNDCP. His Government political will to fight the transit of drugs through its territory was unshakeable, and very strict control measures had been taken in that regard. His country had provided Interpol with important information which had led to the seizure of tons of drugs in recent years.

48. International drug control efforts should be based on the principles of sovereignty of States, sharing of responsibilities, non-interference in domestic affairs and reinforcement of international cooperation within the framework of international law. Any unilateral evaluation by one country, based on its own national legislation, of the policies of another country in that area, was quite invalid, impeded international action and diverted attention away from the struggle against drug abuse. Only United Nations organs were empowered to make such an evaluation.

49. Mrs. MESDOUA (Algeria), speaking on agenda item 102, said that, since isolated action at the national level had not produced the desired results, the international community must do more to prevent, control and punish crime; the United Nations provided the ideal framework for shaping a coordinated approach.

50. She expressed satisfaction at the recent steps taken by the Administrative Committee on Coordination to encourage the specialized agencies, the programmes and funds and the financial institutions to include the drug question in their programmes, so that the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control would become a true instrument for coordinating and strengthening activities in that area. UNDCP had done very worthwhile work during the preceding five years and its operations should be strengthened and its resources increased.

51. Over the preceding 10 years, the international community had established legal standards and created an institutional framework for regional and international cooperation in the struggle against illegal drugs, which would be greatly reinforced by universal ratification of the international treaties, the adaptation of domestic legislation and the implementation of the relevant programmes.

52. In less than a decade, local drug use had increased considerably in Africa and the continent had become a major drug trans-shipment centre; that was why Africa was insisting that the interests of the transit countries, not only those of the producer and consumer countries, should be taken into account. Regional institutions must give their full attention to the Declaration and Plan of Action on Drug Abuse Control and Illicit Drug Trafficking in Africa adopted recently by the Organization of African Unity.

53. Studies had shown that 70 to 75 per cent of the drugs seized were simply being shipped through Algeria and that, although local use and illegal drug trafficking within the country involved mainly drugs of natural origin (cannabis and its derivatives), the use of psychotropic substances was increasing. Those

studies established an undeniable link between drugs and terrorist activities carried out by transborder networks involved in arms trafficking and drug trafficking.

54. Faced with that situation, the authorities had taken preventive, deterrent and punitive measures. They had established a national commission to combat drugs and drug addition and had designed and implemented a nationwide plan with the cooperation of the relevant government bodies and non-governmental organizations. Prevention, supported by the media, was currently aimed at educating society, especially young people. Deterrence was based on improving border surveillance by making more human and materiel resources available for that purpose; UNDCP assistance would be most welcome. Lastly, with regard to punishment, Act 85-05 on the protection and promotion of health, the criminal code, and the laws relating to customs, postal services and telecommunications, contained severe penalties for drug traffickers. In an effort to adapt and modernize its legislation, the Ministry of Justice had planned a major revision of the laws dealing with illicit drug trafficking in order to harmonize them with the international conventions to which her country was a party. The country was also endeavouring to create a permanent governmental coordinating system for implementation and follow-up of the national plan.

55. Her country, convinced that only a global coordinated approach could put an end to the drug scourge, fully supported the efforts to prepare the special session of the General Assembly on international drug control.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.